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DAN SMOOT

PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION

On October 13, 1962, the 87th Congress adjourned.

The most extravagant Congress in the history of the United States, the 87th had given President Kennedy most of what he had asked for. Nonetheless, the President was already campaigning for Representatives and Senators who would give him more power and spend more money during the next two years.

What does President Kennedy want? The tax collections "authorized" by Congress during the first two full fiscal years of the Kennedy Administration total approximately 220 billion, 859 million dollars.[1]

The tax collections of the federal government for the 143-year span from its first year (1789) through 1932 (that is, to the beginning of Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal) *totaled* 87 billion, 769 million dollars.[2]

In two *peace-time* years, Kennedy took from the American people in taxes almost three times as much as all Presidents from Washington to Franklin D. Roosevelt took, during 143 years which included the cost of our War for Independence, the War of 1812, the Mexican War, the Civil War, the Spanish American War, innumerable Indian Wars, and World War I.

Improving Education

The 87th Congress approved a budget of $4,972,327,000 (4 billion, 972 million, 327 thousand) for the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare during the 1963 fiscal year.

The federal government has no constitutional responsibility in the fields of health, education, or welfare. Hence, the almost-five billion dollars for the Department of HEW represents a vast plundering of the American people for illegal and unconstitutional programs.

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The size of the plunder is not, however, the best measure of its harmful effects. For example, one of the smaller items in the Department of HEW budget during 1963 is $658,901,000 (658 million, 901 thousand) for the Office of Education. The United States does not have a national education system. Under the Constitution, we could not have one. If we value our freedom, a national education system is about the last thing we should permit. Yet, here is a United States Office of Education, spending more in one year than the total of all expenditures of the federal government during *any* year from 1789 to 1910.

The *official* purpose of the national Office of Education is, of course, not to dictate or manage a national education system, but to serve rather as a national clearing house on matters educational — to recommend, guide, and assist, toward the end of improving public education generally in the United States.

It should be obvious that a private organization (controlled by the need to make a profit and the necessity of doing a superior job in order to keep customers) could serve these purposes infinitely better than a governmental agency, and for about 1% of the cost.

But, ignoring the excessive cost of the services performed by the governmental agency — and ignoring the more important fact that a governmental agency has no constitutional authority to operate in this field at all — let us consider the question of whether the U. S. Office of Education is actually *improving* public education with its enormous annual expenditure of tax money.

Many believe that improvement is needed.

Here are excerpts from an extensive commentary on public education, made in March, 1958, by Vice Admiral Hyman G. Rickover (often called the "father of the atomic submarine"):

"The chronic shortage of good scientists, engineers and other professionals which plagues us is the result of time wasted in public schools which must be made up later on."

"[America is] reaping the consequences of the destruction of traditional education by the Dewey-Kilpatrick experimentalist philosophy.

"For all children, the educational process must be one of collecting factual knowledge to the limit of their absorptive capacity.

"Recreation, manual or clerical training, etiquette and similar know-how have little effect on the mind itself — and it is with the mind that the school must concern itself.

"Dewey's ideas have led to elimination of many academic subjects on the ground that they would not be useful in life, and to substitution of trivial, recreational and vocational subjects alleged to be of more practical value.

"The student thus receives neither intellectual training nor the factual knowledge which will help him to understand the world he lives in, or to make well-reasoned decisions in his private life or as a responsible citizen. . . .

"He is instead handed a bag of know-how tricks; he is helped to become a pleasant, nicely mannered young person, able to get along with whatever group he joins. . . .

"It is time we turn back to the home what is properly the function of the home and permit the public schools to concentrate on what is properly their function — the education of young minds."(3)

What does the Office of Education propose to do about the conditions criticized? In May, 1962, the U. S. Office of Education published *Education For Freedom and World Understanding*. On page 23, the "Long Range Objective" of American education is stated:

"Our fundamental goal is a progressive nation in a peaceful world. . . . Achieving this objective demands understanding of and commitment to the proposition that education is a primary instrument for social advancement and human welfare."

What happened to knowledge, scholarship, discipline, and intelligence?

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Traditional Education

The early American public education system is credited to Horace Mann (1796-1859) and William Holmes McGuffey (1830-1906). Mann wrote of education:

"I hold it to be one of the laws of God that the talents of man can be developed in the best way and can produce the most beneficial results only when they act in full conscience with all the precepts and principles of religion. The pursuit of knowledge or science is the pursuit of truth.

"Between science and religion there must be harmony. Truth can never conflict with itself. No work of God can ever come into conflict with any word of God.

"Educate your children. Educate them in the great eternal principles of justice and right which underlie the entire length of human existence."(4)

Horace Mann was a founder and philosopher of American public education. William H. McGuffey was a teacher and educator.

"McGuffey's Readers were more than readers: while learning to read, the beginning student was absorbing doses of the vitamins of moral law and principles of behavior....

"The books were compilations of excerpts from the writings of great statesmen and politicians, well known moralists and outstanding religionists of the previous century.

"They reflected the great schisms, political, religious, and moral issues of the period.

"They emphasized the identity of the moral and natural law, defined the Christian fundamentals from which sprang the social virtues of truthfulness, temperance, modesty, kindness, and tolerance....

"They buttressed the concept of the sacredness of property and bulwarked the position of the middle class in society."(4)

John Pierpont was another Founding Father of public education in America. His *National Reader,* originally published in 1827, was used for years in *grammar* schools throughout the eastern United States. Here is the opening paragraph of "Lesson I, Discovery of America," in Pierpont's textbook for *grammar school* children:

"On Friday, the third day of August, in the year one thousand four hundred and ninety-two, Columbus set sail from Palos, in Spain, a little before sunrise, in presence of a vast crowd of spectators, who sent up their supplications to Heaven for the prosperous issue of the voyage; which they wished, rather than expected."

How does that compare — in beauty, and style, and richness of expression — with textbooks for *high school* students today?

In the preface to his grammar school textbook, John Pierpont summed up his ideas about what education should be and do for the children of America:

"This country has political institutions of its own — institutions which the men of each successive generation must uphold. But this they cannot do, unless they are early made to understand and value them. It has a history of its own, of which it need not be ashamed....

"Our country, both physically and morally, has a character of its own. Should not something of that character be learned by its children while at school? Its mountains, and prairies, and lakes, and rivers, and cataracts, its shores and hill-tops, that were early made sacred by the dangers, and sacrifices, and deaths, of the devout and the daring — it does seem as if these were worthy of being held up, as objects of interest, to the young eyes that... are opening upon them, and worthy of being linked, with all their sacred associations, to the young affections, which, sooner or later, *must* be bound to them, or they must cease to be (what they now are) the inheritance and abode of a free people."

Traditional American education stressed knowledge, hard work, honor, duty, self-reliance with Divine guidance, Christian and American traditions, and individualism.

It was not easy, but it developed great men and women — sturdy individualists who (without federal aid or foreign aid) transformed the "backward" and "underdevel-

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oped" American wilderness into the most free and most fruitful civilization in the history of mankind.

The Sappers

While the hardy individualists, who were the products of traditional American education, were building the nation, the thought-streams of the nation were being corrupted in prosperous and settled regions, by some intellectuals who were ill at ease in the daring and manly world of America — and who, therefore, readily responded to the tired, cynical, and sickly socialist philosophy prevalent in Europe.

John Dewey was one of these; and he, more than any other, is responsible for bringing socialist theory and revolution to American education.

Dewey rejected the old American concepts that there are fixed moral laws and eternal truths. He rejected God, holding that man has no soul: that man is merely a biological organism subject to the changes and adaptations required by his environment.

The goal of a Christian individualist is to take the hand of God and pull himself above the dull level of mediocrity — to stand on a pinnacle of spiritual growth and individual accomplishment. To Dewey, this was preposterous. Dewey scorned individualism and held that the proper goal of the biological organism called *man* is to lose his individuality by finding acceptance and absorption in the great mass.

The kind of education Dewey recommended was conceived to develop men and women into faceless factors in a controlled and leveled-down mass of humanity.

Deweyism is a combination of socialist political theory and modern psychology. The nearest that Dewey himself ever came to expressing, in direct terms, his philosophy of education can be found in his book, *My Pedagogic Creed* (published in 1897):

"— The only true education comes through the stimulation of the child's powers by the demands of the social stimulation in which he finds himself. Through these demands, he is stimulated to act as a member of a unity, to emerge from his original narrowness of action and feeling, and to conceive of himself from the standpoint of the welfare of the group to which he belongs.

"— Education, therefore, is a process of living and not a preparation for future living.

"— We violate the child's nature and render difficult the best ethical results by introducing the child too abruptly to a number of special studies, of reading, writing, geography, etc., out of relation to this social life.

"— The true center of correlation on the school subjects is not science, nor literature, nor history, nor geography, but the child's own social activities."(5)

William F. Warde, in an article on "John Dewey's Theories of Education" (published in the *International Socialist Review,* Winter, 1960, issue) says:

"The Progressive Education Association, inspired by Dewey's ideas, later codified his doctrines as follows:

"1. The conduct of the pupils shall be governed by themselves, according to the social needs of the community.

"2. Interest shall be the motive for all work.

"3. Teachers will inspire a desire for knowledge, and will serve as guides in the investigations undertaken, rather than as task-masters.

"4. Scientific study of each pupil's development, physical, mental, social and spiritual, is absolutely essential to the intelligent direction of his development.

"5. Greater attention is paid to the child's physical needs, with greater use of the out-of-doors.

"6. Cooperation between school and home will fill all needs of the child's development such as music, dancing, play and other extra-curricular activities.

"7. All progressive schools will look upon their work as of the laboratory type, giving

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freely to the sum of educational knowledge the results of their experiments in child culture."

In 1904, John Dewey (an admitted socialist)[6] left the University of Chicago to become head of Teachers College at Columbia University in New York — where his ideas have molded the thinking of leading American "educationists" ever since.

When Dewey retired in 1930, two of his colleagues and disciples at Teachers College — Dr. Harold O. Rugg and Dr. George S. Counts — were well prepared to carry forward his drive for "progressive education."

In 1933, Dr. Rugg wrote *The Great Technology*, a book for teachers. Dr. Rugg told the teachers that America must be converted into a socialist dictatorship. He did not, of course, put it that bluntly. He said that we must have a "new government" with "all-pervading" powers to plan and regulate the lives of the people and the economy of the nation.

Dr. Rugg said that teachers had the important job of conditioning "a new public mind" for the "new social order." He knew that when one thoroughly brainwashed generation of children became adults, the socialist revolution would be virtually automatic. As Rosalie Gordon points out, he gave teachers specific suggestions:

"The teachers must disabuse their pupils' minds of any archaic ideas they might have about our history. They must be told that the American Revolution was not a revolt of men who wanted to be free against an all-powerful, tyrannical and tax-eating government. It was just a brawl between American landlords and the British nobility, and the men who led the Revolution were merely interested in their own property. The students must be taught that our free-enterprise system is a failure — it breeds poverty and inequality and the only fair system is a planned one, run by the government.

"But Dr. Rugg did not stop with the teachers. He wrote 14 textbooks, 14 student workbooks and 14 teacher guides; and he himself boasted that this service was studied by some 5,000,000 young Americans."[7]

Here is how Dr. George S. Counts expressed the real purpose of Dewey's "progressive education":

"In the collectivist society now emerging the school should be regarded, not as an agency for lifting gifted individuals out of the class into which they were born and of elevating them into favored positions where they may exploit their less-favored fellows, but rather as an agency for the abolition of all artificial social distinctions and of organizing the energies of the nation for the promotion of the general welfare. . . . Throughout the school program the development of the social rather than the egotistic impulses should be stressed; and the motive of personal aggrandisement should be subordinated to social ends. In promotion practices, in school activities, in the relations of pupils and teachers and administrators, the ideal of a cooperative commonwealth should prevail. . . . All of this applies quite as strictly to the nursery, the kindergarten, and the elementary school as to the secondary school, the college, and the university."

"You will say, no doubt, that I am flirting with the idea of indoctrination. And my answer is again in the affirmative, or, at least, I should say that the word does not frighten me."[7]

Dr. Counts helped organize a small group of educators to study the problem of changing the curricula, textbooks, and teaching techniques in the schools of America. The group was called the Commission on Social Studies of the American Historical Association. Its work was financed by a $340,000 grant from the Carnegie Corporation,[8] one of the tax-exempt organizations which supports the Council on Foreign Relations.[9]

The Commission recommended that separate courses in history, economics, civics, and geography be abandoned — or, rather, all combined into one course to be called "social studies," with emphasis on "social" or "conflict of masses" ideas. Holding that the age of American individualism was dying and must be replaced with a socialist ("collectivist") nation, the Commission said:

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"Cumulative evidence supports the conclusion, that, in the United States as in other countries, the age of individualism and laissez faire in economy and government is closing and that a new age of collectivism is emerging."

"As to the specific form which this 'collectivism,' this integration and interdependence, is taking and will take in the future, the evidence at hand is by no means clear or unequivocal. . . . Almost certainly it will involve a larger measure of compulsory as well as voluntary cooperation of citizens in the conduct of the complex national economy, a corresponding enlargement of the functions of government, and an increasing state intervention in fundamental branches of economy previously left to the individual discretion and initiative — a state intervention that in some instances may be direct and mandatory and in others indirect and facilitative. In any event the Commission is convinced by its interpretation of available empirical data that the actually integrating economy of the present day is the forerunner of a consciously integrated society in which individual economic actions and individual property rights will be altered and abridged."[8]

British socialist leader and economics professor Harold J. Laski (one of whose "special" pupils was John F. Kennedy)[10] said of the Commission's report:

"At bottom, and stripped of its carefully neutral phrases, the report is an educational program for a Socialist America."[8]

John Dewey provided the rationale. His disciples supplied the techniques and the textbooks. Financiers of the Invisible Government put up the money. And the program to convert America into a socialist nation by corrupting public education was formally begun in the mid 1930's.

In 1935, the public schools of New York City began to adopt the techniques and textbooks of Deweyism. By the beginning of World War II, many (if not most) school systems in America had been converted, in whole or in part, to Dewey's "progressivism."

Exposure – And New Progression

Americans who love and understand their nation's traditions and heritage, and who watched the socialist revolution with deep and critical concern, were fully aware of what was happening to education, and why.

Many parents realized that our fabulously expensive system of schools and colleges was graduating young people who could not spell, write a decent sentence, work simple problems in arithmetic, or read with understanding; but the general public did not seem to know, or care, that something basic had happened to education in America until the late 1950's when the "space race" between the Soviet Union and the United States began.

After the first Soviet sputnik was launched in 1957, there was a general outcry that the Soviets were outstripping us in education.

And then, the managers of the great Invisible Government combine revealed their genius for tacking with the wind, to shift blame for their own failures to others, and to perpetuate their programs, despite evidence that they are programs of disaster.

When initiating their revolution in American education in the 1930's, the progressive educationists decried traditional education as a system for developing an educated elite. They demanded "democracy" in education — a general leveling that would give all children precisely the same kind of education.

At the same time, however, the progressive educationists were searching for some means of developing a specialized education for a socialist elite. The White House Conference on Child Welfare and Protection in 1930, for example, produced a report which touched on the problem of finding "gifted children" and giving them "special treatment" so that they would become leaders in working "for the general welfare." The progressive educationists realized that if they could indoctrinate a

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chosen few of the brightest children in socialist ideas, these few could eventually control the masses for socialism.

But, since one of the effective battle cries of the progressive-education movement was "democracy in education," as opposed to "education for an elite," the socialists could contrive no means of providing special educational opportunities for a socialist elite — until after 1957, when the nation became generally aware that there was something fundamentally wrong with the whole system of progressive education.

The very "educationist" groups (among them being the National Education Association) who had supported "democracy in education" for a quarter of a century, were among the foremost in the late 1950's to advocate elaborate programs for "testing" and "speed-up" courses to find, and give special attention to, the gifted children in our schools.

In 1957, shortly after "Sputnik" went into orbit, President Eisenhower spoke to the nation on the need for improved education in America. He recommended *national* examination and testing as a means of establishing standards "of excellence" by which all school systems could measure themselves.

In 1958, Congress passed, and Eisenhower proudly signed into law, the National Defense Education Act. This Act was a step towards establishment of a national education system, and the creation of the "elite."

Title V in this Act provides for grants to state educational agencies to assist in establishing and maintaining programs of guidance, counseling, and testing; it provides for grants to "guidance institutes" to improve the preparation of counselors; and it authorizes assistance to states for "testing" in secondary schools.

During March, April, and May, 1960, a massive battery of standardized tests were given to 450,000 students in 1357 secondary public schools in all 50 states of the Union. This gigantic testing program, "Project Talent," was sponsored by the National Institute of Mental Health, the National Science Foundation, and the Office of Naval Research — financed by the United States Office of Education with funds provided by the National Defense Education Act of 1958. The University of Pittsburgh supervised the testing.[11]

Nationwide "testing" to find the "elite" had become a reality.

The National Merit Scholarship Corporation operates the largest private nationwide "testing" operation. It spends large sums of money to find the brightest students — and to give them scholarships at such places as Harvard, where they can be thoroughly indoctrinated in the fabian techniques for socializing America. The NMS Corporation gets most of its money from the Ford Foundation and from the Carnegie Corporation — two of the interlocking untouchables which finance the Council on Foreign Relations.

Indeed, five of the Directors of the National Merit Scholarship Corporation are members of the Council on Foreign Relations: Laird Bell, Walker Lee Cisler, John S. Dickey, Frederick L. Hovde, and Dexter M. Keezer.[12]

The Committee for Economic Development (one of the most powerful organizations which is interlocked with the Council on Foreign Relations and whose managers, therefore, are key figures in America's Invisible Government)[9] is presently directing an incredible number of nationwide "educational" programs, both in and out of schools, to educate the American people for acceptance of a socialist economy. Details on many of these programs are given in my book, *The Invisible Government.*

One of the newest, and potentially the most dangerous, of the CED's vast educational efforts is "College of the Air," a program which subtly inculcates the principles of keynesian economics (socialism) in a series of nationwide television programs (CBS), under the sponsorship of some of America's largest industrial corporations.

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What To Do

The Council on Foreign Relations, the great tax-exempt foundations, the National Education Association, and a vast array of other semi-private organizations interlocked with them, have planned and directed the "progressive" revolution which has done so much harm to basic education in America, and which has saturated the nation in socialist propaganda; but at the very center of the movement, acting as national clearing house, giving the odor of sanctity and the stamp of official approval — and providing vast sums of tax money — is the U. S. Office of Education.

President Kennedy wants to elevate the U. S. Office of Education to cabinet status. Instead, the Office of Education — indeed, the whole Department of Health, Education, and Welfare — should be abolished.

The finest educational system this nation ever had — the traditional system, which cost only a fraction of what our present system costs — existed before the federal government was permitted to meddle extensively in educational activities. If we would get the federal government out of the educational field, the parents of America (who provide the money and the children for our schools) might eventually regain control of education.

None of this is intended to be even an implied criticism of contemporary school teachers. We have many fine teachers in our schools. Most of them, however, are required to spend so much time on so many things having nothing to do with basic education that they have little opportunity to teach. The good teachers are also victims of the "progressive" system which "educationists" have imposed on our nation, at our expense, for the purpose of destroying the kind of America most of us love and cherish.

FOOTNOTES

(1) *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report*, January 18, 1962, p. 74; *U. S. News & World Report*, January 29, 1962; *Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, 1961

(2) *The Budget In Brief*, Bureau of the Budget, Government Printing Office, 1962

(3) *The Tablet*, Brooklyn, New York, March 29, 1958, pp. 1 & 33

(4) Charles W. Coulter & Richard S. Rimanocsy, *Education for What?*, published by the Intercollegiate Society of Individualists

(5) Lewis Albert Alesen, *Mental Robots*, Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1957, pp. 59 ff.

(6) Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Age of Roosevelt, The Politics of Upheaval*, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1960, pp. 154 ff.

(7) Rosalie M. Gordon, *What's Happened to Our Schools*, America's Future, Inc., 1956

(8) Rene A. Wormser, *Foundations*, Devin-Adair, 1958, pp. 146 ff.

(9) Dan Smoot, *The Invisible Government*, 1962

(10) Selig S. Harrison, "Kennedy as President," *The New Republic*, June 27, 1960, p. 10

(11) *Dan Smoot Report*, "Aiding Our Schools," March 20, 1961, pp. 93-94

(12) *The Foundation Directory*, Russell Sage Foundation, 1960, pp. 138-139

WHO IS DAN SMOOT?

Dan Smoot was born in Missouri. Reared in Texas, he attended SMU in Dallas, taking BA and MA degrees from that university in 1938 and 1940.

In 1941, he joined the faculty at Harvard as a Teaching Fellow in English, doing graduate work for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the field of American Civilization.

In 1942, he took leave of absence from Harvard in order to join the FBI. At the close of the war, he stayed in the FBI, rather than return to Harvard.

He worked as an FBI Agent in all parts of the nation, handling all kinds of assignments. But for three and a half years, he worked exclusively on communist investigations in the industrial midwest. For two years following that, he was on FBI headquarters staff in Washington, as an Administrative Assistant to J. Edgar Hoover.

After nine and a half years in the FBI, Smoot resigned to help start the Facts Forum movement in Dallas. As the radio and television commentator for Facts Forum, Smoot, for almost four years spoke to a national audience giving both sides of great controversial issues.

In July, 1955, he resigned and started his own independent program, in order to give only one side — the side that uses fundamental American principles as a yardstick for measuring all important issues.

If you believe that Dan Smoot is providing effective tools for those who want to think and talk and write on the side of freedom, you can help immensely by subscribing, and encouraging others to subscribe, to *The Dan Smoot Report.*

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